

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 EB-08 COME-00 OMB-01 /100 W
-----070198 102210Z /21

R 101340Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1450
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
USCINCEUR
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 2741

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, TU, US, GR
SUBJ: TURKISH REACTION TO GREEK EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN THE EMBARGO

1. TURKISH REACTION TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION TO
SEEK REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO HAS BEEN POSITIVE BUT RESTRAINED.
THE RESTRAINT IS INDUCED BY A REALIZATION THAT ADVOCATES OF
THE EMBARGO WILL MAKE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO KEEP IT IN PLACE AND
THAT THEY MAY SUCCEED. TURKS DIVIDE THESE PRO-EMBARGO
ELEMENTS INTO THREE GROUPS--GREEK CYPRIOTS, GREEK-AMERICANS,
AND GREEKS--AND THEY REACT DIFFERENTLY TO EACH OF THEM.

2. FROM THE GREEK-CYPRIOTS THE TURKS EXPECTED A HYSTERICAL
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RESPONSE, AND THEY ARE NOT SURPRISED NOR PARTICULARLY DISTURBED,
AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE THEY CONSIDER GREEK CYPRIOT INFLUENCE
TO BE RELATIVELY SLIGHT. SIMILARLY, THEY EXPECTED A STRONG
REACTION FROM GREEK-AMERICANS, BUT IN THIS CASE THEY ARE
MORE DISTURBED. TURKS HAVE AN EXAGGERATED NOTION OF THE
POWER OF THE "GREEK LOBBY" AND FEAR THAT IT WILL BE SUCCESSFUL
IN PREVENTING THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO.

3. THE TURKS HAVE PERHAPS BEEN MOST DISTURBED BY THE REACTION OF THE GREEKS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE OF STRONG SUPPORTERS OF ECEVIT WHO FEEL THAT CARAMANLIS' CRITICISM OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION REVEALED A FUNDAMENTAL DISINTEREST IN IMPROVING GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS-- AND PERHAPS EVEN WORSE, CONSTITUTED A PERSONAL REBUFF TO ECEVIT.

4. IF THE EFFORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO REPEAL 620(X) SHOULD FAIL, THE TURKISH REACTION WOULD PROBABLY BE STRONG. THE MOST IMPORTANT IMMEDIATE FACET OF THAT REACTION WOULD BE ANTI-US AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, ANTI-NATO. BUT ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACET OF THIS REACTION WOULD BE ANTI-GREEK.

5. WE WONDER WHETHER THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND THE GREEK-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THE US HAVE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY THE CONSEQUENCES FOR GREECE OF A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO KEEP THE US ARMS EMBARGO ON TURKEY. WHATEVER INFLUENCE WE DO HAVE IN TURKEY IS AS A RESULT OF THE POSITIVE ELEMENTS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP. IF THOSE POSITIVE ELEMENTS ARE UNDERMINED AND IF THIS COMES ABOUT AS A RESULT OF GREEK AND GREEK-AMERICAN EFFORTS, THE ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES FOR GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS ARE LIKELY TO BE EXTREMELY SERIOUS.

6. WE URGE THAT AS A PART OF OUR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEFENSE
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OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION WE NOT TRY TO BELITTLE THE ADVANTAGES THAT WILL ACCRUE TO TURKEY, BUT RATHER TO EMPHASIZE TO GREEK PARTISANS THAT WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THEIR INTERESTS ARE BEST SERVED BY A COOPERATIVE GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP AND THAT SUCH A RELATIONSHIP IS ONLY POSSIBLE IF THE US AND TURKEY ALSO HAVE A PRODUCTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP. THE ALIENATION OF TURKEY FROM THE WEST WILL HURT, BUT IT WILL NOT SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZE US SECURITY; IT COULD, HOWEVER, HAVE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR GREEK SECURITY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, EMBARGOES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ANKARA02741
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780154-0653
Format: TEL
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780476/aaaacmoo.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a1a0aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3025971
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TURKISH REACTION TO GREEK EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN THE EMBARGO
TAGS: PEPR, TU, US, GR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a1a0aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014